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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
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THE NEW WORLD DISORDER

by

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Captain, U.S. Navy

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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A purpose of this paper is to distill the new world disorder into a general condition, which has existed throughout history, known as Revolution. It then goes on to describe the common threat which revolution poses to enduring U.S. interests in peaceful change and progress. Finally, the paper emphasizes adaptive planning as the mechanism for the regional CINCs to respond to the threat and to shape unstable conditions away from revolution toward peaceful change and progress.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Recent history was defined and "contained" within an East-West, bipolar context. Today's strategic environment, as detailed in the January 1993 National Security Strategy, is dominated by complex and ambiguous political, economic and military challenges. Today, nations define themselves, more or less on their own merits, without a superpower sponsor. Seemingly, global independence has been won -- albeit unexpectedly -- from Cold War polarization. In a manner of speaking, history, that had been interrupted by the war years, resumed. Yet, this sudden win and vacuum of power thrust much of the world into chaos and position for complete self-determination for which nations were economically, socially, and politically unprepared. It is these same economic, social, and political forces which traditionally foment insurrection or revolution.

Because the potential for revolution and change is so prevalent in today's environment, it is the purpose of this paper to define the chaos -- the new world disorder -- in the context of a revolutionary threat. Identifying a common threat benefits delineation of future policy, strategy and forces.

### Study Objectives and Scope.

This paper has two basic objectives: The first is to establish "revolution" as the pervasive world condition and threat to U.S. security interests. Revolution's principal dimension - a motive or cause - will be outlined since it serves as the underpinning to any revolutionary development. The second objective is to emphasize the need for U.S. involvement early in a revolution's development for the purpose of shaping conditions toward peaceful change and progress.

Such a broad discussion precludes full analysis of existing revolutionary/counter-revolutionary doctrine and development. Also excluded from discussion is a critique of previous U.S. intervention in revolutions. There is a plethora of information which covers all these issues. This paper is not intended to reconstitute a primer on revolution - what it is and how to fight it. Rather, the overall purpose is to distill today's chaotic environment into a general condition consistent with accepted doctrine and to offer an approach for intervening in that condition.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NEW WORLD DISORDER: REVOLUTION

"The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgement that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish . . . the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.

Clausewitz, On War.<sup>1</sup>

#### Definitions.

"Revolution" is the architecture which describes the new world threat. The fact is there are numerous terms which are used interchangeably to describe the condition of revolution . . . rebellion . . . internal conflict . . . insurrection . . . revolt. . . civil war. . . low intensity conflict . . . insurgency/counterinsurgency. . . to name just a few more prevalent in the military lexicon. Yet, "revolution" seems to be the more universally accepted term. In fact, one author made the point that insurgency and counterinsurgency (C/I) were politically correct "euphemisms" for revolution and counter-

revolution so that revolutionaries would seem less legitimate and more like outlaws -- insurgents.<sup>2</sup> Since revolution is frequently associated with change in diverse arenas - cultural, technological, social, etc. - for this purpose revolution means the:

"... modification, or attempted modification, of an existing political order at least partially by the unconstitutional or illegal use, or threat of use, of force".<sup>3</sup>

Yet another definition adds a purpose in revolutionary activity that, when combined with the previous definition, fulfills a mission statement.

Revolution - the forcible overthrow of a government followed by the reconsolidation of authority by new groups ruling through new political (and sometimes social) institutions.<sup>4</sup>

It is possible to recognize widely interchangeable terminology using the JCS definition for insurgency:

Insurgency - an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.<sup>5</sup>



The JCS definition goes on to state that:

" . . . insurgencies generally espouse a revolutionary doctrine. The contest is for legitimacy, the willing acceptance by the general population of the right of a group or agency to govern and make and enforce decisions".<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, it is customary for countrymen to fight countrymen, and in this sense, civil war, revolution, or insurgency are acceptable synonyms. Although, internal conflict becomes less clear cut when outside powers intervene, the fact remains it is an internal civil war with internal causes.<sup>7</sup>

Colonel Waghelstein at the Naval War College goes further to describe the category of "low intensity conflict more accurately as revolutionary warfare" . . . It is total war at the grass-roots level -- one that uses all the weapons of total war, including political, economic and psychological warfare with the military aspect being a distant fourth in many cases.<sup>8</sup>

Defense theorist Robert Osgood defined the most fundamental distinction in war however, as that between internal and external conflict, or between revolutionary war and inter-state war.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, for the purpose of defining the new world order, revolution will be the threat concept under discussion. However, for preciseness, insurgency and like terms will be directly referenced while no distinction in meaning is intended. Revolution, insurgency, etc., are widely interchangeable.

### History Resumed.

As even American history points out, revolutionary tendency is nothing new. It is just that during most of the Cold War years it was largely "contained" or existed below the threshold for our primary attention while the world focused on East-West tension.

Underlying the premise of this paper -- that revolution is the "new" world order -- are:

- (1) Revolution has merely returned to the surface;
- (2) History has resumed unbridled by a Cold War and;
- (3) Independence from East-West attachments resemble traditional revolutionary patterns.

For the first fifteen years after the Second World War, nationalistic fervor in the context of freedom from colonialism was the most usual cause of uprisings.<sup>10</sup> In general two fundamental challenges confronted most nations following

independence: lack of national integration and economic underdevelopment. The lack of national integration was rooted in societal divisions -- racial, ethnic, linguistic, or religious-- and in the absence of a political tradition. Accordingly, it was not surprising to find intergroup antagonism and distrust eventually giving rise to insurrection directed at governments. Moreover, these rivalries often became just one of several impediments to economic development.<sup>11</sup> Burma, Malaya, India, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Iraq, and the Sudan note but a few.

In addition to insurgencies rooted in intergroup antagonisms, history also reveals there are those that had as their main cause socioeconomic disparities between classes. Whether it was the Philippines in the early 1950s, Cuba in the late 1950s, Laos and Vietnam in the late 1950s and 1960s or El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua in later years, the story was a familiar one: small ruling establishments controlled the lion's share of economic wealth and political power.<sup>12</sup>

Yet it was primarily due to the Cold War and to East-West balance of power politics that some revolutions assumed enough significance to attract U.S. attention. The long struggle in Vietnam waged against the spread of communism stands out in this regard. Subsequently, however, the "no new Vietnams"

syndrome resulted in even less attention being paid to revolutionary situations on the periphery. Since history is replete with examples, suffice it to say that U.S. attention to revolutionary situations diminished, not the occurrence of revolutionary activity.

Yet, the Cold War conflict also produced other interesting phenomena - some revolutions were restrained by the high probability of superpower intervention and fear of escalating a regional war, and yet others were seriously repressed by government and military powers because there was little likelihood of East-West confrontation over less important regions.<sup>13</sup> Although in actuality these revolutionary situations were "contained", nonetheless, internal problems of these countries remained unresolved and festering.

Now that containment has been abandoned, history can pick up where it left off with revolutions simmering.

#### The Threat Today.

As defined earlier, revolution presents several threats to our national security interests. U.S. security objectives<sup>14</sup> and associated revolutionary threats are summarized below:

- Global and regional stability which encourages peaceful change and progress

- Is at risk to: the cumulative costs of individual conflicts measured in lives lost, destruction of property, and loss in social and economic development, and;
- Potential expansion of conflicts and spread of revolutionary problems (e.g., population growth, weak economies, unstable governments, drug trafficking, social tensions)
- **Open, democratic and representative political systems worldwide**
  - Is at risk to revolutions by authoritarian, totalitarian or other non-democratic regimes, and;
  - Respect for human rights and international law are in jeopardy.
- **An open international trading and economic system which benefits all participants**

- Is threatened by reduced access to a region's vital resources and interrupted sea lines of communications due to revolutionary conflict.
- An enduring global faith in America - that it can and will lead in a collective response to the world's crises
  - Confidence in American leadership is at risk to revolutionary conflicts and, more importantly, to revolutionary successes.
  - Particularly threatened are emerging democratic governments, U.S. citizens, territories, allies and interests overseas.

**Telling Aspects of Revolution. . . Cause and Change.**

Revolutions will be prominent in the post Cold War world and for the foreseeable future because first there are no signs that the problems which give rise to these conflicts have diminished, and secondly, extensive research generally concludes that "periods of transition account for tidal waves of disturbances".<sup>15</sup>

### An Underlying Cause.

"Everywhere inequality is a cause of  
revolution"

Aristotle

Since the time of Aristotle, political thinkers have posited that inequality is a primary impetus for social revolution. Even more so, "Inequality perceived as correctable is an important precondition for revolution".<sup>16</sup> And although revolutions vary considerably in how they proceed, there are three underlying causes -- political, economic, and social inequality.

Inequality, broadly speaking, is not having equal opportunity for an expected economic, social or political object.

### Political Inequality.

Just as all revolutions differ, so too the primary underlying factor which accounts for their development. Yet, whether economic or social conditions give rise to a revolution is closely related to the existing political culture and system.

Political inequality can spring from any number of sources -- e.g. weak judiciary, no mechanism for transfer of power, invasion by a foreign power, government abuse, denial of self-determination, failure to distribute government authority through society. Yet among the foremost challenges that face transitional or developing societies is the achievement of national integration.<sup>17</sup>

The obstacles to national unity are attachments to race, language, religion and customs. The pressing issue of unassimilated minorities in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is a recent example of political separatism that produces the condition for revolution. Political separatism involves the substantial and systematic exclusion from valued positions because of class, group, ethnic, religious, linguistic or regional characteristics.<sup>18</sup>

#### Economic Inequality.

Economic inequities are major underlying causes of revolution. Broadly, these include economic deprivation and discrimination. A class (e.g. peasants in Latin America and the Philippines) or a group (e.g. Kurds in Iraq, blacks in Sudan) may be denied a fair share of the wealth. Reversal of "fortune" is also an impetus whereas an advantaged group may



revolt to protect their privileged status. A recent example is this case is in the Sri Lanka where revolution is occurring against changes in which Tamils would lose their highly disproportionate share of jobs.<sup>19</sup> Land inequality, income inequality and disparate living conditions are most often sources of economic tension.

### Social Inequality.

The third major cause underlying revolution has to do with lack of equal opportunity in a country's social structure. Society can be divided among many lines, chief among these are race, ethnicity, religion, and class. Where one group enjoys disproportionate political or economic power, support for revolution normally comes up through the disadvantaged group. On the other hand, revolutions may occur because an advantaged group galvanizes support emphasizing historical antagonisms or a "threat" which a minority group poses to the majority culture, et al.<sup>20</sup>

While this illustrates interaction between political, economic, and social causes of revolution -- the distinct root cause exists in inequality which is perceived to be correctable. Revolution becomes the route to this end.

### Impact of Change.

In addition to political, economic, and social causes which underlie revolution, a second key feature is the influence of change on conditions for revolution. Industrialization, modernization, urbanization, democratization -- any change in traditional political, economic or social systems has potential for revolution if it produces or exacerbates inequality.

The impact of rapid change is even more significant, since rarely do political, economic or social institutions already exist for mitigating the instability which rapid change produces. Bearing especially on today's post Cold War environment, the breakup of the Soviet Union is probably the best example of instability and potential for revolution under these conditions.

Yet, not all change results in revolution. It is the brand of change which highlights the essential condition for revolution -- imbalance in political, economic or social equality. For example, a high rate of economic growth (positive change) will in itself not diminish the outbreak of internal war if political or social inequality still exists.<sup>21</sup> Similarly in the case of emerging democracies, revolutionary

conditions will ensue unless balanced economic and social development accompanies the political improvements.

Since a national security objective seeks peaceful change and progress, balance, or symmetry in economic, political, and social developments is important to achieve this objective. How we manage change signals potential for revolution.

### CHAPTER III

#### APPROACHING DISORDER

By most accounts, "insurgency has now become the most prevalent form of warfare in developing nations of the new world".<sup>22</sup> In addition to revolutions ongoing around the globe, post Cold War events and conditions are predictive of even greater frequency for revolution. Seething nationalism, the painful emergence of capitalism and democracies, religious fundamentalism, regional conflicts, rising despots, drug trafficking, and economic crises<sup>23</sup>, each are critically destabilizing influences on national political, and economic and social systems.

Accepting revolution as the new world order and as a common threat to U.S. security interests, what is the agenda?

Volumes have been assembled, which describe counter revolutionary warfare and it is not within the scope of this paper to reexamine it. Rather it is the first purpose of this chapter to address the overarching question - what conditions do we want to create in today's revolutionary environment to achieve our strategic objectives?

Shaping Peaceful Change and Progress.

"We will work to shape change lest it engulf us".

President Clinton, Inaugural Address January 1993

Through the U.S. National Security Strategy, we are seeking peaceful change and progress toward specific political, economic, and defense objectives. It is a likely preference then to achieve our security interests, not through force, but in "shaping our uncertain future".<sup>24</sup>

Since we have stated our preference to shape global conditions in the accomplishment of our aims, the manner of U.S. involvement in the world today, especially in revolutionary conditions, must therefore come under scrutiny. There are two apparent weaknesses in U.S. action in world events. "One is to engage seriously only when conflict has emerged, and secondly, to assume the ability to resolve crises through direct application of resources".<sup>25</sup> While our record of involvement in revolutions is controversial and results are mixed,<sup>26</sup> the approach alone has numerous limitations. Chief among these limitations are it tends to single out events and ignore the cumulative threat of revolutionary conditions; it intervenes once the "problem has already advanced to a critical

degree"<sup>27</sup>; and it is reactionary, not fulfilling our preference to shape world events.

The remainder of this chapter proposes an alternative approach such that we shape today's revolutionary conditions toward peaceful change and progress.

### Early Intervention.

It is widely recognized that revolutions pass through various stages of development. Even today, some are still simmering in an incipient stage, others have developed to use of force, and still others have progressed to the objective change in the government. Chapter II did not go beyond the establishment of a motive or cause for revolution because of its pivotal importance. The cause -- political, economic or social inequality -- is the seed for revolutionary development.

" . . . if no cause exists it will have to be invented. If a genuine one exists but is not capable of attracting sufficient support, it must be amended until it does. If a good one exists but has lost its appeal for one reason or the other, it must be revived. If it is absolutely impossible to produce a cause with enough popular appeal, the

enterprise will have to be abandoned because it will be found useless to try and promote revolution without one."<sup>28</sup>

It is the contention of this monograph that intervention must occur at this important juncture if we expect to achieve conditions that remove or minimize threats to national interests, either individually or cumulatively. Once a revolution has progressed into consolidation of grievances, into the formation of organized groups which can threaten the government, or into the eruption of violence, the U.S. is "going to face severe limits to its leverage regardless of intentions, resources, and will".<sup>29</sup>

The unifying motivation factor and the role of a permissive international environment are two factors which go furthest toward explaining and predicting revolutionary action and success.<sup>30</sup> Therefore not just intervention -- but early intervention -- in revolutionary conditions is crucial to U.S. security interests. Early intervention gives one the best chance to shape conditions away from destabilizing revolutionary development toward peaceful change and progress.

An Integrated, Adaptive Approach.

"Trying to stop a revolutionary movement by troops in the field is like using a broom to hold back a great ocean".

Woodrow Wilson, Paris, 1919

Political, economic and social inequities manifested in the world today are smoldering revolutionary conditions. Shaping these conditions away from the potential revolutionary threat to U.S. interests requires a balanced and integrated application of all the elements of national power early in the revolutionary process.

When approaching developing revolutions, the U.S. must intervene as early as possible. Although the situation in its incipient state may not be directly threatening to U.S. interests, the best promise to shape future events is long before the situation has become irreversible for the host government. Any sort of delay plays into the hands of the revolutionaries by buying them time with which to consolidate their position.

The approach must also target ameliorating the out-of-balance political, economic and social systems. Consequently, the U.S. approach should be balanced, invoking all elements of



U.S. power - political, economic, diplomatic and military. The existing mechanism to unify American national policy within each foreign country and to work with the host nation governments is the interdepartmental "Country Team" under the direction of the U.S. Ambassador. The Country Team is a good starting point and a component part of an overall regional approach.

Yet, the U.S. government bureaucracies have not demonstrated strength and synchronization working together. There is widespread recognition both within and outside of the Government that interagency coordination within the national security apparatus is seriously inadequate.<sup>31</sup> The principle obstacle to effective U.S. action is not lack of resources, but inadequate coordination between executive agencies.<sup>32</sup> Even in situations where basic policy choices and commitment are clear, all too frequently the major obstacle to effective execution is not necessarily limited resources, but rather the inability to achieve unity of command and effort among various competitive authorities.<sup>33</sup> Consequently, any integrated approach must mitigate the existing obstacles.

The National Security Strategy emphasizes regional perspective and "regional solutions to regional problems as the most enduring path to peace". It also states that the U.S.

will provide the leadership needed to promote peace and security. Accordingly, the CINCs with regional responsibilities are in the best position to unify effort, to provide leadership, and to integrate resources regionally to accomplish our national security objectives.

The theater strategic environment, especially as it pertains to potential for destabilizing revolution, bears directly on the CINC and national security considerations. The CINC in his peacetime capacity can be a major influence to achieve peaceful change and progress, to preclude threatening development of revolutionary conditions and to ensure the use of force does not become necessary. Moreover, the existing CINCs theater strategy already employs joint or combined operations or interagency actions to support national security strategy in peacetime, as well as conflict and war. CINCs work with U.S. diplomatic missions (e.g. through Country Teams) and other U.S. agencies to ensure these elements are integrated and applied in an efficient and coordinated manner.

Another tool for which the CINC has responsibility is a category of plans to "actively employ resources on a day to day basis to build military and alliance readiness; foster stability; promote peace, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; protect lives and property; help our friends, allies,

and those in need of humanitarian aid".<sup>34</sup> Tasking the CINC for operational planning which targets the incipient stage of revolution in order to remove or minimize revolutionary threats is consistent with national security strategy. Planning for nation assistance meets this criteria.

Nation assistance is defined as the mission of assisting a host nation in its efforts to restructure, reinforce, or rebuild its formal and informal institutions. Included within this definition are assistance with disaster and disorder relief, environmental repair and control, economic development and security assistance. The primary goals of nation assistance are to help a host nation develop its capacity to nurture its society, to guide it in the process of change, and to help it establish or sustain conditions which build stability through orderly, responsive change.<sup>35</sup>

As the leaders then in regional shaping, conflict prevention, and crisis intervention, the January 1992 National Military Strategy tasked the CINCs to use an adaptive planning framework to focus on interagency unity of effort for problem analysis and preemption. Adaptive planning addresses the regional security environment with a balanced application of all the elements of national power - political, economic, military and diplomatic. It emphasizes versatility in various

military and diplomatic. It emphasizes versatility in various responses to different regional developments. It facilitates early decision making and response by laying out a range of military, political, diplomatic and economic options gauged to particular regional conditions. The flexible framework is especially well suited to early intervention, to unity of effort, and to ensuring an integrated plan for peaceful change and progress.

Yet one thing we must accept is some revolutions are sufficiently developed and are destabilizing influences already. In this regard we have well developed counter insurgency plans on which to fall back. The purpose of the future, however, is to intervene early and to the shape revolutionary conditions with a coordinated body of political, economic, diplomatic and military initiatives. Regional adaptive planning is an essential opportunity to exploit our national instruments of power to meet today's challenges.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

Our strategic thinking is dominated by the goal of a peaceful and prosperous world. Yet sources of revolution abound -- population explosions, underdeveloped economies and social structures, nationalism, refugee migrations, demands on weak political systems, disputed borders, minority struggles, religious factionalism, programs of terror.

The U.S. foreign policy justification for intervention in world events is no longer to contain communism. The reasons today are the leadership role of the U.S., and the preponderance of revolutionary conditions and their serious threat to world order.

Given the justification for U.S. involvement, the long term interests of the U.S. in nurturing peaceful change and progress are best served by recognizing the problems within nations and taking an active and integrated approach to an early solution before revolution has a chance to develop.<sup>36</sup>

The adaptive planning process acknowledges the leadership role of the CINCs to preempt crisis and to involve all the elements of national power in problem solving. It can and

should be used aggressively to develop operations which shape regional conditions toward peaceful change and progress.

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